LABOUR MONTHLY

EDITOR R. PALME DUTT

THE WORLD TRADE UNION CONFERENCE

by

ARTHUR HORNER

NOTES OF THE MONTH — R.P.D.

ANGLO-AMERICAN ECONOMIC CONFLICT — J. R. Campbell

THE FRENCH POLITICAL SITUATION IN 1945 — Clemens Dutt

EQUAL PAY — L. C. White

Mr. BRAILSFORD, DEVIL'S ADVOCATE — Ilya Ehrenburg

Etc., Etc.

TEHERAN—ACT II

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THANKS TO OUR READERS

The explanation of the position of the LABOUR MONTHLY given last month by the *Editorial Board* has been followed by a very heartening response of readers. The appeal to maintain the fund at the height of one hundred pounds each month, and if possible to go above that level in order to redress the balance of the later months of last year where there had been a falling off, has been met both by an increase in the number of those who contribute and by an enhanced total—£108 13s. 9d.

This is very gratifying; and though not yet at a rate which would rapidly wipe off the 1944 deficit in the total aimed at, it nevertheless affords us confidence that, given a continuance of the same upward effort, the months of 1945 will see the magazine past its present difficulties and able to go blithely ahead with the plans for expansion.

The monthly mark remains at £100. The special effort to surpass that mark is still called for: and we do not think it will be called for in vain.

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

Teheran—Act II

FROM the recent statements of President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill it is clear that the conference of Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin (and, possibly also, De Gaulle) may be expected in the near future. This conference will take place at the culminating and decisive phase of the war, which has been opened by the new Soviet offensive. Thirteen months have passed since the Teheran Conference laid down the foundations for the world's future. A rich harvest has followed its decisions. We may be confident that the coming Conference will deal a blow to all disrupters and fainthearts, and carry forward the work begun at Teheran to new heights of achievement.

The Great Offensive

The magnitude of the new Soviet offensive already reveals it as the greatest military offensive and the decisive offensive of the war. It offers to the alliance the supreme opportunity for a speedy and complete finish to the war in Europe, provided that it will be possible rapidly to overcome the delays caused by Rundstedt's counter-thrust in the west and develop a full-scale western offensive parallel to the eastern offensive. Only once so far, in September of last year, has for a short time a combined offensive with full-scale activity on both sides battered Germany from east and west; and the result was the greatest crisis Germany has yet known, from which the Nazi spokesmen judged it "a miracle" to have escaped. The strategic purpose of Rundstedt's thrust in the west is recognised on all sides to have been a preliminary manoeuvre preceding the oncoming Soviet offensive, to prevent the synchronised Allied offensive which was planned. The supreme aim of the western allies is now in consequence to defeat this Nazi strategy of "one at a time," and to use to the full the present opportunity, with the disorganisation of the main German armies in the east, to strike hammer-blows against the weaker German armies in the west. "Marshal Stalin," declared Mr. Churchill with reference to the present Soviet offensive, "is very punctual. He would rather be before his time than late in combination with the Allies." Let us endeavour to show that punctuality is a virtue also not unknown in the west.

Towards the Western Offensive

In the words of *The Times* military correspondent, the new Soviet offensive

> may rule out the second stage of the German offensive in the west which at one time seemed probable. On the other hand, it would place upon the western allies the responsibility of making every possible effort to tie down German forces in the west and prevent them from interfering with the Russian operations. (January 18, 1945.)

Similarly the *Evening Standard* military correspondent judges that the final outcome of the new Soviet offensive will depend on

> the ability of the allies in the west to prevent the temporary reinforcement of the east with troops either from the western front or from Italy. The non-arrival of ten or twenty divisions from the west to help out the disorganised forces in the east may make all the difference to German resistance to the Russians. (January 18, 1945.)

It is already reported that some Nazi divisions have been moved from the west to the east. We may hope that Mr. Churchill's "hope and belief" will prove well founded that the Rundstedt break-through will have "in no wise delayed or still less averted the doom that is closing in upon them from the west."

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An End to Miscalculations

Are the Anglo-French-American forces sufficient in the west to accomplish this task? It might seem strange to ask this question in view of the overwhelming numerical and material strength of the armed forces of the British Empire and the United States, even after allowing for the requirements of the Far Eastern and Italian fronts, as well as the highly efficient, though under-equipped French army. But it is not sufficient to possess numerical and material superiority; it is necessary to use to the best advantage and concentrate those forces without waste and superfluous dispersal. "I wish they were more numerous," declared Mr. Churchill in his speech to Parliament with reference to the British divisions on the western front, and added that every effort would be made to supplement them "from every possible source within the next few months." Yet in the selfsame speech he described how during the critical past weeks, the weeks of Rundstedt's offensive, "our reinforcements rapidly and steadily arrived"—where? To the western front? Against the Nazi enemy? No; against the anti-fascists on the Greek mainland, where there were no Germans left. That fact alone would be the most damning indictment of the Greek adventure.

De Gaulle's Warning

"Fantastic underestimation of the German capacity for resistance," declared General de Gaulle in his broadcast speech on January 17, characterised Anglo-American military and political strategy during the later months of 1944, until the Rundstedt offensive delivered an awakening shock. Facile assumptions based on the ease of advance over France and Belgium, over ground prepared by the resistance movements, led to the conception that the German armies were finished, that there would be the same ease of advance over German ground, where there was no resistance movement, and that the war would be over by Christmas. These expectations were spread from very high military quarters (but not General Eisenhower) of Britain and the United States. It was these assumptions that led to serious consequent decisions in the political direction of the war: the abandonment of the previously agreed priority of the European war, and decision to divide forces equally between Europe and the Far East, at the very moment when the maximum concentration was needed to finish off Nazi Germany; the diversion of attention from the military enemy to the popular movements as the enemy; the disarmament, under threat of military force, of the Belgian resistance movement, on the eve of renewed Nazi invasion of southern Belgium; and the dispersal of sorely needed troops and arms to fight the Greek liberation movement instead of the Nazis, with the whole Tory pack view-hallooing on the new trail to hunt after an enemy more to their taste.

Mr. Churchill's Conscience

Amid the thunders of the Soviet offensive and the echoes of the salvos for liberated Warsaw Mr. Churchill addressed Parliament on January 18. After the tragic episode of military intervention against the Greek liberation movement, and after the shock to public expectations through the von Rundstedt counter-offensive in the west, which the diversion of strategy, men and materials had helped to facilitate, the nation was relieved and rejoiced to acclaim the resumption of the victorious march against Germany. Mr. Churchill's awareness of the contrast was revealed in his repeated references to his "conscience" in relation to recent aspects of British policy. After all, no politician refers to his conscience unless it is uneasy. It

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would never occur to Mr. Churchill to protest that he had a good "conscience of the rectitude of his motives" in fighting Nazi Germany. Similarly, his comic attempt to designate the enemy in Greece as "Trotskyism" revealed his sense of the incongruity of denouncing Communism at a time when Communist armies are suffering the heaviest sacrifices and dealing the heaviest blows against the common enemy, Nazi Germany. It is time to clear up as rapidly as possible the harmful consequences of past errors, and concentrate the united national endeavour against the real enemy, Nazi Germany and Japan. In this battle Mr. Churchill will have the united support of the nation.

Greece—the Acid Test

It is in the light of this military situation of the war as a whole that the Greek adventure and decision to impose on the Greek people by force of foreign arms, battleships, bombs and tanks an unpopular Government must be judged. If such a course, however harsh, had been rendered necessary by the major requirements of the war against Nazism, no right of self-determination could be allowed for the time being to stand in the way. We are not fighting this war on the basis of "Lefts" versus "Rights," but on the basis of the common interest of all nations, of all democrats and patriots, whatever their political outlook, to destroy the monster of Nazism and Fascism. We are not demanding of British Conservatives to abandon their predilections for "the Right" against "the Left," provided they do not include in the former term fascists and supporters of fascism over whom to throw their mantle of protection. We only demand, and have a right to demand, that they do not allow their partisan predilections to disrupt the front of the peoples fighting fascism or sabotage the war against Nazi Germany. But if the military intervention in Greece was not dictated by any requirement whatever of the war against Nazism; if, on the contrary, it withdrew urgently needed forces and arms from the war against Nazi Germany; if it was only directed for partisan political purposes to disrupt the national front of all those who had fought the Germans, and to protect or place in power those who had lived passively under the Germans, negotiated with the Germans or served the Germans, then such action becomes a crime against the alliance of the United Nations, against British democracy and against British soldiers.

Democrats or Plotters?

Which of these two types has characterised the Greek situation? The facts are inescapable. The dispatch of British troops to Greece was not directed either to liberate Greece from Nazi rule or to pursue the war against Nazism. Greece, apart from the islands still occupied by the Nazis, was already liberated, by the Soviet advance to the Balkans and Tito's advance making the German position impossible, and by the action of the Greek liberation movement (Eam and Elas) before the British military expedition. Athens and the whole Greek mainland was already under the orderly rule of Eam, before any British troops arrived or Papandreou was brought on a British warship. Then was the time for Eam to carry through a "plot," if that had been their intention. On the contrary, they strove for the broadest democratic and national front of all who stood against the Germans—directly carrying forward the broad popular front of all democratic parties and organisations which had already been established and won a majority in Parliament eight years ago, when that Parliament with a popular majority was arbitrarily dispersed by the King and replaced by

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martial law and the fascist dictatorship of Metaxas. For eight years the democratic front has led the undying struggle of the Greek people against fascist dictatorship, first against Metaxas, and then against Hitler and his quislings, and reached its highest point in the organisation of the national liberation movement or Eam, representing, according to Conservative press correspondents writing on the eve of liberation, ninety per cent. of the Greek people.

Whose Plot ?

Why should the war against this democratic front of the overwhelming majority of the Greek people, which had been conducted for five years by the dictator Metaxas, and for three years by Hitler, have been taken over by British arms—even to the extent of using the same fascist police and gendarmerie which had served Metaxas and served Hitler? This is the question which all the proclamations and protestations about "democracy" cannot answer. The Eam leaders and the Greek people welcomed the British military forces as friends and allies, thinking they had come to help in the common struggle against the Nazi enemy and to assist in the final expulsion of the Nazis from the Greek islands. How could they know that these military forces had been dispatched with secret orders, concocted and drawn up months before, as revealed in Mr. Churchill's speech of December 8, to crush Eam—orders which were ruthlessly and provocatively put into operation, despite all the conciliatory attempts and concessions of Eam. The legend of a "plot," the familiar justificatory theory of preventive violence, to "prevent a Communist rising," to "prevent a massacre," follows a technique too often used. This was the technique employed by Hitler to justify the establishment of his dictatorship in 1933, in order to "prevent a Communist rising." This was the identical technique employed by Metaxas and King George in 1936, when the Parliament with a popular majority was dissolved and fascist dictatorship established, to "prevent a Communist rising." If Eam had the support of ninety per cent. of the Greek people, it had no need of a plot. The plot came from other quarters.

Who Was Misled ?

Mr. Churchill has since sought to excuse his evident miscalculation of the strength of popular support of the Greek national liberation movement and its army, Elas, as a result of which what was intended as a police operation became a war against the Greek people, by claiming that he was "misled" as to the military strength of Elas. Who misled him? Not the reports of competent British military officers on the spot, or the tributes of Field-Marshal Sir Henry Maitland-Wilson to the achievements of Elas. Nor the reports which came to the B.B.C., with regard to which the Government found it necessary to issue its special instruction last August that "the Prime Minister has ruled that in principle no credit of any kind is to be given to Elas or Eam on the B.B.C." Nor the inverse tributes of the ferocity of Nazi references to the activities of the partisans (echoed in Haw-Haw's subsequent broadcast: "You British can have the Greeks, and their Eam and Elas; we had them for three years, and had quite enough; now it is your turn"). The "misleading" reports came from the same suspect quarters which for partisan reasons were concerned to deny the plain facts of the broad popular and national-patriotic basis of the Greek liberation movement.

Democracy or Rule by Foreign Bayonets ?

The issue in Greece remains urgent, not only for the importance of the

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situation in Greece itself and its repercussions in the Balkans, but for the wound caused to democratic feeling and confidence throughout the United Nations. The present uneasy truce can only be the beginning, not the end of a settlement. What is the position? By force of foreign arms alone a Government of unpopular and unrepresentative figures, who played no part in the struggle against Nazism, led by a man already known as the author of half a dozen attempted coups d'etat, supported by a fascist police, and surrounded by a medley of ex-Metaxist agents and crooks, has been imposed on the Greek people—in the name of "democracy." Not Greek support, but British support maintains this Government; in Mr. Churchill's words, "*the Greek Government are largely dependent upon our armed forces for their existence.*" There is no lasting solution here. New steps are essential. And in the search for a solution a warning needs to be given against the present propagandist attempt to conceal the true issues and justify the violence of the reactionaries and pro-fascists by highly-coloured charges of excesses against the Greek popular movement. This also is a familiar technique. Precisely the same type of charges were also made against the early Soviet Republic (by the same Leepers, Alexanders, Plastiras' and other anti-Soviet crusaders), as always against every popular struggle for freedom.

Next Steps in Greece

The only lasting solution must be a democratic solution. This is agreed in principle on all sides. But a democratic solution is not achieved by maintaining by violence an unrepresentative Government and its fascist supporters in power, and then promising future elections with "universal suffrage," "secret ballot," etc.—after the democratic organisation has been broken up, its leaders thrown in prison, and the fascist police have beaten up the people. This was the familiar technique of Hitler in 1933, first to establish his terror and break up the popular organisations, and then to hold "democratic" elections, with "universal suffrage," "secret ballot," etc. A democratic solution requires a full amnesty and negotiations now for the establishment of a Government representative of all the democratic forces of the Greek people; in which Eam will have its due part; which will reorganise the police and replace all sectional armed formations by national armed formations under the control of such a Government; and in which the people will have confidence to organise democratic elections. Such a solution corresponds to British interests, which will not be served by attempting to build on reactionary fragments that will collapse as soon as foreign arms are withdrawn, but by a lasting agreement with the representative democratic forces of the Greek people.

Democracy Resurgent

In all the liberated countries of Europe, as well as in the ex-satellite countries withdrawn from Nazi domination, the same issues arise, in varying forms and degree, of democratic development, of destruction of the fascist and pro-fascist enemies of the people, and release of the popular anti-fascist forces. The claims of democracy are not met by legalistic formulas about future elections, if in the present decisive phase (when "the moulds can be set out to receive a great deal of molten metal") the forms of State power are being already determined by the maintenance by external force of reactionary Governments against the popular anti-fascist resistance movements. This essential principle of living democracy today, that it must be based on the fighting

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front against fascism, was clearly recognised by *The Times*, when it declared in its editorial on December 16:—

> The National Provisional Government of any liberated country, in justice and expediency alike, must be built around the active and most turbulent resistance movement which has kept the flame of nationhood alight under enemy occupation, privation and terror. Its head must be a man accepted by and active in resistance. Its members must be a majority of resisters. Its policy and programme must be in tune with those which have been worked out, close to realities, in the fighting underground.

This is the wise judgment of the organ which today speaks for the most far-sighted and realist section of the ruling class in this country, and which can count it an honour to have incurred the sneers of the Tory backwoodsmen. Alongside this judgment we may set the proud boast of Ilya Ehrenburg on behalf of the Soviet Union:—

> If in the countries liberated by the Red Army the traitors are in prisons and not in rest-homes, if the guerillas of Slovakia, Norway and Bulgaria are not disarmed, it is because the Red Army is a liberator and not a guardian.

Europe Reborn

The tragic events in Greece, or the difficulties in Belgium or Italy, must not for one moment blind us to the gigantic advance which is now sweeping forward, not only in the military field for the final destruction of the Nazi Moloch, but also in the political field, for Europe's rebirth from the fascist torture-chamber. In Jugoslavia the Tito-Subasic Agreement is supported by Britain and the Soviet Union, despite the rearguard resistance of the royal camarilla. In Rumania, Bulgaria and Hungary cruel and corrupt fascist regimes are being smashed, and the people are rising in new life. The Bulgarian trial is placing in the dock, not the mere petty quislings from the back-alleys as scapegoats for the rich and powerful collaborators, but the main criminals, the former regents, including Prince Cyril, handed over by the Soviet Union (is it not time for Britain to hand over Prince Paul to Tito?) forty former ministers and 130 fascist deputies. In Finland scores of fascist oganisations are being dissolved, and the working-class movement after a quarter of a century of white terror is tasting again free rights of organisation. In liberated Czechoslovakia democracy returns. Together with the ending of the Nazi occupation, the old Poland of pogroms and concentration camps, the Poland that fed on the Munich plunder, and that barred the road to the Anglo-Soviet Pact for peace, is going down, mourned only by the tiny unrepresentative handful existing in London on foreign subsidies; and the new democratic Poland is being born—the new Poland of the people, in which already, in place of the twenty-year-old unfulfilled promises of agrarian reform, within a few weeks the estates of 698 wealthy landlords have been distributed among 100,000 peasants. Franco's days are numbered. The French-Soviet Treaty and the Czech-Soviet Treaty, alongside the British-Soviet Treaty, are the corner-stones of the arch protecting the new democratic Europe from the plots of German aggression and fascist revival.

Fascism Shall Not Escape

All these aims of European liberation, centre round one main essential precondition—the absolute and irrevocable destruction of German Nazi-military power and the extirpation of fascism in Europe, so that it shall never rise again. This is immediately and in the first place a military task; and it is this military task, to concert the common action for the final vanquishing and unconditional sur-

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render of Nazi Germany, which may be expected to occupy the forefront of attention in the coming Conference, in continuation of Teheran. But it is also a political task, and will involve the final drawing up of the agreed lines of settlement for Germany which will disarm its power, exact full retribution and defeat all the plots of Nazi and military revival.

"German Post-war Underground"

Nothing was more illuminating in the recent revelations of Mikolajczyk about his former Polish colleagues than when he disclosed, not only how they had originally banked on a Russian defeat and a German victory, but how they were now calculating, in view of the prospect of German defeat, on collaboration with "the German post-war underground," i.e., with Nazism after defeat. This revelation threw a grim light on the dark forces which will continue to seek to operate in Europe, even after German military defeat, to find their central base in Germany and to count on future disruption of the victor alliance for reversal of the outcome of the war. The extirpation of fascism in Europe will require still a prolonged and tenacious struggle of the democratic forces, a peace settlement that will leave no room for the revival of German power, the firmest unity of the democratic coalition and ceaseless vigilance.

German People's Future

For this reason the Prime Minister's emphatic reaffirmation of the principle which found expression in President Roosevelt's slogan of "unconditional surrender," namely, that there can be no negotiated peace with Nazi Germany, was welcome. The critics who denounce this as "bad political strategy" on the grounds that it "offers no hope for the German people" show a very curious conception of fascism. Is the destruction of fascism "no hope for the German people"? The brave minority of German anti-fascist fighters will not agree with these critics. The realist judgment of the fifty German generals who signed the recent "Appeal to the German Army and People" answers these critics, when they set out in plain terms the only alternative to self-destruction with Hitler:—

> Our people must not perish! Therefore it is necessary immediately to put an end to the war. What will happen then? you will ask.
>
> True, our Fatherland will be occupied by enemy troops, but an end will be put to the senseless sacrifices on the fronts and in the Fatherland, while the homes and enterprises which have so far escaped destruction will be preserved.
>
> True, the victors will demand punishment for all iniquities caused to their peoples, but only those will face the court who are guilty of crimes against the laws of culture and humanity.
>
> Certainly, our future will not be easy. We shall work, we shall restore. But the road of progress will again open before us. Instead of terror, arbitrariness and racial hatred will be the triumph of law and order and humanity. Instead of endless calamities and horrors, peace will set in. With every step along the new path, our industriousness and goodwill will draw us nearer to the day when a free and equal German people will take its place among other peoples."
>
> ("Appeal to the German Army and People": Declaration signed by fifty German Generals, including Field-Marshal von Paulus, General von Seidlitz, etc., and published in *Free Germany*, organ of the Free Germany National Committee, December 10, 1944.)

This message, with its plain and common-sense approach from Germans to Germans, is a thousand times better "political strategy" than the proposals of the "humanitarian" critics for offers of soft terms which will leave a loophole for the Nazi bandits—or than the official policy of toleration of Nazism still pursued in the Anglo-

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American prisoners-of-war camps, where recently, in a United States camp, the organised Nazi prisoners murdered six anti-Nazi prisoners.

War Criminals

In this connection, it is of vital importance that the still remaining confusions in official and semi-official expression in this country on the treatment of war-criminals, despite the explicit terms of the agreed Moscow Declaration of last year, shall be once and for all finally cleared up. The circumstances of the resignation of Sir Cecil Hurst from the chairmanship of the War Crimes Commission in London; the alleged rejection by Lord Simon and the Foreign Office of the united demand of the War Crimes Commission for the trial of Hitler, Hess, Himmler, Goering, Goebbels and company as war criminals; the lavish treatment of Hess in this country; the protection of Prince Paul, and similar circumstances, as well as the memories of the flagrant deceptions and fiasco which followed the last war, have caused deep public disquiet. The pretence of juridical difficulties is a subterfuge. All these supposed technical and legal difficulties, which are so pompously paraded in official hand-outs, have been authoritatively dealt with and demolished by D. N. Pritt in his pamphlet, *War Criminals* (published by the LABOUR MONTHLY); and no attempt has been made to answer his arguments.

World Labour Unity

While the Governments responsible for leadership of the United Nations will be meeting in the near future, there will be taking place in the beginning of February a Conference of parallel significance for the future of the peace settlement and the post-war world. The delegates to the World Trade Union Conference are already assembling. It will constitute a gathering with a breadth of representation without parallel in the entire history of the international labour movement. The accredited representatives of fifty million organised workers can play a great and responsible part in shaping the policies for victory over fascism, for the peace settlement and for the building of the post-war world. They can forge unbreakable bonds of unity between the organised working-class movements of the world. They can prepare the basis for the first time for a United Trade Union International, extending eventually to every country and continent, without distinction of race or colour or creed or particular political outlook, within the common aims of the working-class movement. We may hope and be confident that the Conference will rise to the height of its opportunities, make short work of all attempts at obstruction or disruption, and establish a foundation which will prove ever memorable and lasting in its historic consequences as the starting-point of the broadest international labour unity in fulfilment of the dreams of the pioneers.

Unity at Home

The British Trades Union Congress can be proud of the part that it has played in taking the initiative and convening this World Labour Congress on such a broad and representative basis, without allowing those sectional differences to stand in the way which have in the past so often been made the excuse for obstruction and for hindering the effective united action of the international working-class. There is equal need for effective unity in action of all the forces of the labour movement here in Britain. We cannot afford a division which plays into the hands of reaction. At the same time we need here also to find the forms of that broad unity which can allow for differences of particular

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outlook and organisation, expressive of a living and growing movement, and yet present a common front to the common enemy. In the immediate situation this is above all the question of unity in the coming election. The establishment of labour and progressive unity will be decisive for the outcome of the approaching municipal and general elections; and that outcome will govern the immediate future in Britain.

Towards the Whitsun Labour Conference

The special character of the proceedings at the Labour Party Conference in December prevented any resolution on this issue being taken, despite the known wide support in affiliated organisations. The short debate on the reference back of a section of the Executive Report was wholly inadequate to the seriousness of the issue, and did not permit of any positive proposals being placed before the Conference. No resolution on labour and progressive unity has yet been presented to a Labour Party Conference, discussed or voted on. It may be expected that this crucial issue will come up for decision at the Whitsun Conference. This policy has already the support of a number of leading Trade Unions, as well as constituency parties; and several members of the Labour Party Executive have individually expressed themselves in favour. It is a common-sense policy which wins increasing support wherever the issue is presented. The campaign between now and May will be of vital importance to spread the widest understanding of what is at stake, in order that this great step forward may be achieved by the Whitsun Labour Party Conference.

R. P. D.

January 22, 1945.

The World Trade Union Conference

by ARTHUR HORNER

THE World Trade Union Conference, summoned by the General Council of the Trades Union Congress in November, 1943, postponed from June, 1944, for reasons connected with D-Day, and now to meet in London this month, is a gathering whose importance can hardly be overstressed. It is a landmark in the war: in the year of victory and liberation the Trade Unions of the world, and in the first place of the United Nations, are coming together to consult on how to make that victory speedy and secure and to play their part in the full liberation of the countries from fascism, in the plans for a lasting peace. It is a landmark equally for the international labour movement: the trade union organisations, obstinately disunited and split up in peace time, have found in the common purpose of the destruction of fascism a rallying-point and a means now of common assembly for deliberation on war and post-war problems. Out of this meeting there can and should arise a world trade union international. The victory over fascism will be incomplete if it results in less than this.

For these aims to be reached it is essential that there be a clear grasp of realities past and present amongst the delegations and in the movements they represent. To begin with, this is the moment when, especially in this country, the plain facts of the years before the war must be clearly seen and estimated. The past is a grim enough tale. Before the war there was no united trade union movement. Indeed, within a series of countries, including some of the largest, there were several competing trade union

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centres. On the international field the principles proclaimed in 1864, after three-quarters of a century had elapsed, had still only a limited application.

The International Federation of Trade Unions, from the time of its reconstitution in Amsterdam twenty-five years ago, had never been able to justify its title on a world scale. The Trades Union Congress was affiliated to it, as were a dozen other national centres. But it represented before the war only a minority of the world's trade unionists. In 1936, at the time of its London Congress, there were little over a quarter of the world's trade unionists affiliated to this I.F.T.U. The unity which its title seemed to imply had been repeatedly rejected; first in the years from 1924 onwards, when the German trade union leaders exercised a dominating influence within it; and then ten or twelve years later, when the menace of fascism brought up sharply the need for unity.

Thus, before the war, the International Federation of Trade Unions was mainly of a limited West European character.* The Trades Unions of the U.S.S.R. were outside it: and so were the American unions organised in the powerful Congress of Industrial Organisations.

The consequence of this failure to accept unity of the main trade union forces of the world had its consequence in the failure to develop a clear line of struggle in the fight against fascism. The composition of the I.F.T.U. included some trade union bodies whose main concern was not the struggle against fascism, but their own conflict with Communism. In 1938 this standpoint was expressed, for example, by the Finnish trade union leaders and was carried by them into practice in the last few years, when they acted in concert with Hitler fascism against the trade unionists of Britain and the U.S.S.R.

The failure to develop a clear line of struggle against fascism led to a parallelism with the Chamberlain-Daladier policies of 1936 onwards (appeasement with Hitler, Mussolini; cold-shouldering of the U.S.S.R.) and an ineffective attitude to the struggle of the Spanish Republic. At the opening of Franco's rebellion the Chairman and Secretary of the I.F.T.U. were sending their telegram of protest about the trial of the fifth column in the U.S.S.R.; Spanish democracy was left in the lurch; and the way was laid open for the policy that culminated in Munich and its consequences.

The war of liberation against fascism has brought about an entirely new situation. The whole present position and future prospects of the international labour movement have been radically transformed.

The gulf between the two largest trade union bodies was bridged when the first Anglo-Soviet Treaty of July, 1941, was followed in the autumn of that year by the setting up of an Anglo-Soviet Trade Union Committee representing the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions and the British Trades Union Congress. The decisions reached at its first meeting, the eight points of agreement laid the basis for mutual assistance in the war against Hitlerite Germany and thereby for closer relations, exchange of delegations, etc. The meeting of last October went forward to reach common agreement on certain main questions of the peace settlement, subsequently ratified by the Trades Union Congress as well as in the U.S.S.R. Although the General Council had not been able to agree to the earlier proposal for the

* This does not necessarily apply to the international industrial federations: e.g., the Mineworkers' International included the United Mineworkers of America (headed by John L. Lewis) and also the mining unions of the U.S.S.R.

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summoning of the World Conference under joint auspices, the appointment of the preparatory commission which met in December with representatives from the U.S.S.R., Great Britain and the U.S.A. ensured that there would be common agreement upon agenda and procedure.

Secondly, the transformation scene in the growth and increased strength of the trades unions throughout the world. Not only has wartime full employment in a series of countries removed the constant menace to the growth and functioning of trade unionism, but the influx of new workers and new strata of the populations into industry has also meant an influx into the trade unions, not to speak of the trade union reserves at present in the armed forces. This numerical increase has been accompanied by a strengthening of organisation and a certain extension of the functions of trade unions to meet war needs. The States in the anti-fascist coalition in nearly every case have had to rely largely on the trade unions in the building up of the Allied war effort.

Thirdly, in particular, there had been a closer participation of the organised workers of the United States with the workers of other countries. Hitherto, in the main, U.S. trade unions had stood aloof; and it was only a little while before the war that the American Federation of Labour had been persuaded to adhere to the I.F.T.U. Even so, there has been a degree of resistance in the A.F. of L. to closer participation and common council. As one of the fraternal delegates from the British T.U.C., it was my duty to present to the A.F. of L. Convention the arguments in favour of world trade union unity. But the official standpoint there was definitely against it. In spite of this the participation has taken place largely through the advance of the Congress of Industrial Organisations in the last decade, as well as in the friendly attitude of the Railway Brotherhoods. The former can now be said to play a leading role, as shown in the part played by its Political Action Committee in the recent Presidential elections within the United States, in its relations with Latin America and finally in its international relations.

Fourthly, in Latin America under the leadership of the Mexican labour movement, a strong anti-fascist trade union movement has developed. Under the pressure of war conditions, in opposition to the Falange activities and other pro-Axis agencies busily engaged not only in Argentina but throughout the other Latin American states, the trade unions have developed and have linked together to uphold the cause of democracy and the interests of the workers. The Labour Confederation of Latin America under the leadership of Vicento Toledano has become therefore an important new factor amongst the world's trade unions. In its international relations it has taken up the cause in an outstanding way of the Spanish people now under the tyranny of Franco. Within the Latin American lands this Confederation has become the chief unifying progressive force in these very varied countries, seventeen of which will be represented in London this month. In my journey into South America I observed such conditions as made me rejoice to witness the new life springing up in this young, vigorous trade union movement.

Fifthly, the greatest transformation has taken place in Europe. In the struggle against fascism the trade union movement in country after country has been born again. In each occupied country trade unionism has been one of the strongest elements of the resistance.

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Lastly, in Asia the trade union movement has advanced with giant strides. In China, the National United Front against Japan has brought the growth of a stable trade union movement numbering hundreds of thousands, in the North-West Provinces (the Border Regions) while in the area under the Kuomintang Government forms of trade unionism have also developed. In India, perhaps the most remarkable feature of the last three years has been the advance of the All-India Trades Union Congress to a position of responsibility alike in furthering the struggle against fascism, in the defence of the workers against the capitalists and the imperialist bureaucracy and in the national movement for liberation.

Meeting under these transformed conditions, the Conference will have a most widely representative character and will bring together the most varied forms of trade union organisation on a scale for which there is no precedent. The total represented may well come to fifty millions or over. It will include, for example, representatives of the "Christian" unions, which existed as a separate movement in several European countries. This was without precedent. But, as the General Council stated in its report to the Blackpool T.U.C. last October, in order fully to interpret the 1943 T.U.C. decision, "it was necessary to extend invitations to all bona fide and representative trade union organisations. This meant, of course, that in those countries where more than one representative organisation existed, each organisation would receive a separate invitation." In later paragraphs of its report the General Council put its reasons clearly and forcibly:—

In an endeavour to anticipate objections, the General Council included in their invitation the expression of their conviction that if the trade union movement was to be rebuilt, it must be attempted on the broadest possible basis. That basis could only be achieved if all bona-fide trade union movements were invited to come together to see how it might be possible to rise above their domestic and national difficulties in the task of rebuilding the international movement.

The General Council felt very strongly that this was a supreme testing-time in the history of the trade union movement, and that the depth of our faith in trade unionism would be revealed by the extent to which all concerned were ready to rise superior to internecine difficulties and national obstacles. Unless the trade unions, representing the working classes, found it possible to sit together in conference, to commune on our common international problems, and to try to find a constructive policy to rebuild our great international movement, the prospects for humanity were dark indeed.

In the application, however, of this policy there are some questions left outstanding. For example, it is not certain that the trade union movements of the ex-enemy countries will be represented. It is not clear what arguments could be used to justify such an exclusion. The argument which correctly excludes representation from fascist Spain or fascist Argentina (and which might be applied to ex-enemy Finland) cannot possibly be applied here. The trade union movements in ex-enemy countries such as Italy, Rumania or Bulgaria were not consenting parties to the alliance with Hitlerite Germany, or to the war against the United Nations; they were suppressed under the former regimes, to which their leading elements maintained a fierce opposition. Their rebirth coincides with the death throes of fascism in these countries, they are and have been, anti-fascist trade union movements.

Nor can the argument be used that their composition is unknown. In the case of Italy such an argument would mean the stultification of the report of the Trades Union Congress delegation thither last year. Again, these countries are co-belligerents: in Bulgaria

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and Rumania heavy losses in fighting against the Germans in this last six months have been sustained by their armies, including many trade unionists.

The first task of the Conference, it was suggested in the invitation from the General Council, should be "The furtherance of the Allied war effort." Although at the same time it was stated that the Conference would be "purely exploratory and consultative in character" so that decisions taken would not be binding upon the constituent organisations unless ratified by them, nevertheless all trade unions of the United Nations cannot gather together without becoming in effect a rallying-centre for action. The labour movement of each country has assumed a particular responsibility in the successful prosecution of the war against fascism. Where joint arrangements have already been made, as in the Eight Points of 1941 and subsequent common decisions of the Anglo-Soviet Trade Union Committee, the intention has been to co-ordinate and increase the sum total of activities directed to the successful prosecution of the war against Hitlerite Germany.

All the allied labour movements at the world gathering can do still more to concentrate attention on every effort being made to increase production so as to ensure the speediest victory of the armed forces; and also upon the maintenance of the standard of life of the workers. It is for this conference to stiffen up the sinews for the bitter fighting that still lies ahead.

The attitude of the trade unions towards a peace settlement, their representation in the peace conference or conferences, their participation in the solution of all post-war problems —these form the second group of questions before The World Trade Union Conference. Amongst these, the first responsibility is to see that the liberation from fascism is full and complete, that after the military defeat of Nazism there should be carried through "the final and irrevocable destruction of fascism, both politically and morally." As was said on November 23 by Kuznetsov, Chairman of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Union, and head of the delegation to the Blackpool T.U.C.:—

All manifestations of fascist ideology should be burnt out with a red hot iron. Aggression of any kind can be prevented if the working masses, through their trade union organisations, participate in the elaboration of all these measures and in the control over the observance of the peace terms.

Equally, it is impossible for the Conference to disperse without reaching a definite line on Germany. On this there may be anticipated that the French trade union movement will powerfully support the agreement already reached (and ratified) by the Soviet and British movements.

The fact that the claim will be made for the participation of the Trade Unions in all peace conferences and committees puts on them an obligation to reach decisions on a series of questions outside the frontiers of each particular country. Amongst these the colonial question is of inescapable urgency. It is in the main since the last world war that the great movements of national liberation have developed in China, in India and in the colonial empires. In the same period the trade union movement has struck root in these vast areas that hold more than one-half of mankind. The business of the world conference, however, cannot be limited to the matter of what aid can be given to these newer trade union movements, but is bound to embrace many aspects of the colonial question. Immediate measures have to be taken. The Teheran decisions allow for such measures. But the kind of measure taken and the extent to which it is carried through will depend

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upon the attitude and activity of the trade unionists of the world.

Similarly, the Teheran structure of the post-war world, the security planned at Dumbarton Oaks, will depend for their maintenance largely upon the vigilance of trade unionists in every country. The Teheran structure requires to be buttressed by international economic co-operation: for no political bastion of peace can endure if it is being continually sapped by trade war between the leading countries. Therefore the question of international economic co-operation becomes a special responsibility of the trade unions.

Apart from the tasks of war and peace, the biggest question before the conference is the building of a World Trade Union International. Here it is clear there can be no question of a revival of the old limited and inadequate forms. Here and now is the opportunity to lay the basis of what will be for the first time a fully representative body capable of playing a key part, with growing responsibility, in world affairs. Whatever hankering there may be for a mere adaptation of the old forms, the attitude of several of the most important trade union centres is already unmistakably clear.

For example, in the resolution* of the C.I.O. Chicago Convention of last November upon this question, it is insisted that it must be a *new* organisation.

Equally clear is the Kuznetsov speech already quoted:—

> The creation of a world trade union organisation is undoubtedly one of the foremost problems facing the World Trade Union Conference. The fact that now we have no world leading trade union centre cannot but have a negative effect on the efforts of the trade unions in the democratic countries. The new world trade union organisation must learn the lesson and draw the conclusions from the situation preceding the Second World War and from the war itself. For instance, one must not forget that not all trade union organisations which existed before the second World War actively fought against the fascist danger.

The World Trade Union Conference will not achieve all that its constituent organisations aim at unless upon the conclusion immediate measures are taken to make its discussions and decisions known to the trade unionists in each country. Press reports in these days of restricted paper supply are not enough: for if the British papers are restricted, the French are cut down almost to vanishing point. So full reports in various forms will be necessary: and this will have to be done at great speed, if the necessary ratification is to be carried through or otherwise in each country in time. But not only popularisation of discussions and decisions is important. What the trade unionists of this and other countries expect is a series of practical steps to follow upon this World Conference.

* See *Document of the Month* page 61.

The Editor of LABOUR MONTHLY will be very glad to receive contributions in the form of finished articles or of suggestions and data for articles. The customary proviso must be made that no responsibility is undertaken for manuscripts sent to him nor can he promise to enter into correspondence regarding contributions not accepted.

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Anglo-American Economic Conflict

by J. R. CAMPBELL

THE political relations of the two great western Allies—the United States and Britain—are undergoing a considerable strain at the moment, and the press of both countries, after a mutual bombardment of reproaches, recriminations, jests and insults—has agreed that the sooner Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin meet to straighten out things the better it will be for everyone.

Things appear to be even worse in the field of economic relations. The differing attitudes of the British and U.S. delegates at the International Businessmen's Conference held at Rye revealed sharp disagreements on all the major questions of the day.

Both U.S. and British business men are suffering from an economic anxiety neurosis. They know that the war has profoundly changed the lines of trade. New countries have become industrialised, old markets have disappeared. The British and American people are haunted by the spectre of mass unemployment. British economists and business men are asking themselves whether Britain can replace the income from lost foreign investments so as to obtain all the imports of food and raw material necessary for her industry. American economists and business men wonder where they will find peace-time markets for their industries, which have been so greatly expanded to meet the needs of the war. Every move made by American business men is watched with intense anxiety and suspicion by the British, and vice versa. If this atmosphere were allowed to develop the very unity of the United Nations would be at stake.

At the Bretton Woods Monetary Conference the main points at issue between the two countries were outlined. Having attained agreement on the question of an International Monetary Fund, and of a World Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the assembled experts called upon their Governments to meet together to arrive at a common policy on the following points :—

(1) The reduction of the obstacles to international trade and the promotion of mutually advantageous commercial relations.

(2) The orderly marketing of staple commodities at prices fair to producer and consumer alike.

(3) The special problems of international concern which will arise from the cessation of production for war purposes.

(4) The harmonisation of national policies designed to promote and maintain high levels of employment and progressively rising standards of living.

Take problem number 3 mentioned above. In all countries, the capital goods industries have been expanded to meet the needs of the war. The proportion of capital invested in them and of people employed in them, is far greater in relation to the economy as a whole, than it has ever been in time of peace. It is agreed that these industries will have to undergo some contraction in peace time. (The amount of this contraction will depend on policy. It will be less than it would otherwise be, if the main capitalist countries can agree on an international policy for economically developing the backward countries of the world.)

But how is the extent to which the capital goods industries in the various countries are to be contracted, to be decided. Is it to be decided by a process of competition within the various countries and on the international field—a process of cut-throat competition in which each state will be expected to render the maximum assistance to the industries of their own country? This is indeed a recipe for international

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chaos. Even those liberal economists whose god is "free competition", shrink from it. They assert that competition is able to make small adjustments in peace time, but express doubts as to whether it can bring about the much greater adjustments which are necessary in the aftermath of war.

Take a concrete example. The aviation industry has been enormously expanded in all countries. The United States aircraft industry, if maintained at its wartime level, could in peacetime produce all the planes needed to maintain a greatly increased air force, and all the planes needed in any enormously expanded world-wide civil aviation industry. But aviation is a strategic industry which every country of any size will seek to develop.

So at the recent civil aviation conference at Chicago two conflicting conceptions met. The U.S. representatives argued for free competition. Let every country produce as many civil aircraft as it wants, let them compete for trade and let the best country win. The British argued for the setting up of an international authority which would apportion quotas of planes to each country. They were supported by most other States.

Here you have a fundamental clash of policies which could be repeated in scores of other fields. We will only take shipping. In pre-war years the capitalists of the United Kingdom owned 17,900,000 tons of shipping. The United States capitalists owned 11,500,000 tons. In the first year after the defeat of Germany the proportions are likely to be—United Kingdom 13,000,000 tons (much of it obsolete) and U.S.A. 40,000,000 tons.

How is the relative size of the merchant fleets of the world to be decided, by an era of embittered competition or by agreement between the governments?

When the U.S. representatives put forward their proposals at Chicago they were accused in the economic press of the rest of the world as being out for world domination of the civil aviation and aircraft industries. On the other hand, U.S. journals represented the proposals of the British as being monopolistic and restrictive, and aiming at hemming in United States industry.

One can almost see the prototypes for the embittered economic controversies of the post-war world being elaborated—the Americans being represented as aiming to become the world's economic Herrenvolk, the British being represented as backward, corrupt monopolists, feverishly building international cartels, in order to prevent the development of U.S. industry. If these were the only tendencies, then goodbye to the possibilities of building a peace which will last for generations.

Fortunately there are other tendencies, which found notable expression in President Roosevelt's budget speech. Congress was urged by the President to implement the Bretton Woods policy of an International Monetary Fund and a World Bank for Reconstruction and Development. There can be no doubt that if such measures were implemented it would simplify the problem between Britain and America. There has been too great a tendency to quarrel over the division of the post-war world market, as if it was bound to be a static, or even a shrinking quantity. But the U.S.A. and Britain have the power to expand the world market. If they get the World Bank for Reconstruction and Development going, then international lending for the development of the backward regions of the world can be developed on entirely new principles. The first effect of this policy will be to provide an outlet for the capital goods industries of Britain and the U.S., so that they need not be contracted to the extent that would otherwise be the case. As the economic d

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velopment of the backward countries proceeds and their standard of life rises, they will become markets, also, for an increasing quantity of consumers' goods. It is the highly industrialised countries of the world which provide the best markets for each other. So perhaps before quarrelling over the division of the markets of the world, there should be a concerted effort on the part of the United Nations to expand those markets.

More important, however, was the unequivocal declaration of the President of his intention to take all the necessary governmental measures to maintain full employment in the United States. There can be no doubt that the operation of such a policy will enormously reinforce those tendencies making for world economic co-operation.

In recent months in Britain, whenever the question of the re-creation of a world-wide system of currency and trade on the lines proposed at Bretton Woods has been suggested the critics have cried out, "What's the use? The U.S. won't play ball. It is a country wedded to the obsolete ideas of *laissez-faire*, and no State intervention in industry. It is a country liable to be devastated by the most appalling economic crises, and if we are linked to it in any kind of international currency system, then we will be dragged down with it." This attitude reached fantastic proportions in certain economic writings. One would have imagined that economic crises were a specifically U.S. disease, that they could not possibly originate in a capitalist Britain.

There can be no doubt, however, that the economic weight of the United States is such that a crisis originating there tends to spread rapidly through the whole world. It will inflict the maximum devastation if the various countries are linked together in the way proposed by the international monetary fund.

There can be no question that world trade, and particularly British exports, rises and falls with the curve of economic activity in the United States. It is true that direct British exports to the United States only constitute about 6 per cent. of our total exports. But most of Britain's overseas customers are exporters to the United States also. When the United States is prosperous, they are prosperous too and tend to buy more from Britain. This was particularly true, between the wars, of the British Dominions, the Argentine, Malaya and the Dutch East Indies. The fluctuating character of U.S. prosperity was therefore between the wars a major economic problem, much more so than the high American tariff. If President Roosevelt can pursue a policy of full employment he has made a major contribution to the orderly expansion of world trade.

If we are seriously intent on world peace we will co-operate with the President on these two major questions, which he stressed in his Budget speech.

Indeed, the time is ripe for the British and U.S. Governments (both of which have now declared in favour of maintaining employment) to get together to discuss ways and means of co-ordinating their policies. If they could arrive at a measure of agreement on their employment policies, then there would be a reasonable probability that there will be expanding trade in the post-war world and the solution of other problems would be greatly simplified.

It is hopeless to expect that all the questions in dispute between the two countries will be settled at one and the same time, and yet there is a school of timorous business men and economists in Britain who would not agree to operate any joint economic policy with the U.S. until every conceivable eventuality has been provided for. A beginning has got to be made some-

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where and the two major proposals made by the President constitute an excellent starting point.

But it is only a starting point and must be followed up by agreements relating to vital interests and services. Take the question of shipping. The size of the mercantile marine which will be maintained by Britain and the U.S. will never be settled by competition between shipping companies, as some American business men suggest. For behind the shipping companies of the respective countries would stand the Governments, each subsidising its own mercantile marine. The effect on Anglo-American relations would be disastrous. The Governments cannot disinterest themselves in this question, so why not come in right away, instead of waiting until a period of frenzied competition has poisoned the relations between both countries.

Or take synthetic rubber. The U.S. is now producing annually a quantity of synthetic rubber equal to one-half of the total annual production of rubber in the pre-war years. Rubber is a commodity for which there is an expanding demand and there is room for both sides of the industry. But is the division of the market between synthetic and natural rubber only to be decided after decades of competition in which plantations and synthetic rubber factories are alike reduced to bankruptcy?

American business men are tremendously suspicious of any international agreements apportioning production. They suspect them as a device for protecting the weaker and more inefficient producer and very often they are right.

But they overlook two major points in the present situation. The first is that the readjustment from war to peace will involve considerable changes as to the proportionate part played by these various industries in the national and international economy. No process of cut-throat competition could bring about this adjustment and no European Government could possibly assent to such a method of tackling the problem. Secondly, a policy of agreement with regard to certain markets need not be restrictive. Agreements which are part of a general policy aimed at increasing world trade can be expansive. Their aim is to secure orderly development in place of chaotic competition.

There are political and business forces in the U.S.A. who understand this. They will be helped by the British Government agreeing with President Roosevelt with regard to the implementing of the Bretton Woods proposals, and with regard to the harmonising of national employment policies. Such a move would create an atmosphere of confidence in which the solution of the other considerable economic problems could be undertaken with reasonable hopes of success.

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The French Political Situation in 1945

by CLEMENS DUTT

THE issue dominating the French political situation in the present period is the future of the Resistance Movement. Events elsewhere in Europe have brought into sharp relief the significance of attacks taking place against the popular resistance forces which led the struggle against German occupation.*

In France, the issue has not arisen so sharply, owing, firstly, to the greater strength and unity of the resistance movement, and, secondly, to the greater identification of the French Provisional Government with resistance in France.

A decisive factor in lessening tension in the internal political situation was the signing of the Franco-Soviet treaty. This treaty not only marks the re-emergence of France as a great power, but decisively aligns it with the progressive forces in Europe. France under De Gaulle looks forward to the international organisation of security based on the Teheran decisions and not backward to a reactionary system of blocs which contain the seeds of future wars. As M. Bidault, French foreign minister, declared in the Consultative Assembly on December 22: "The Government's statement that it does not want a western bloc signifies that it does not want any bloc, continental or other."

The Franco-Soviet Pact was unanimously approved by the Consultative Assembly and received the approbation of the whole country. This is itself significant, for it was precisely in the field of foreign affairs that the most acute differences were evident before the war. The French people feel that their alliance with the Soviet people is sealed by the blood of those in both countries who have fought and suffered martyrdom at Nazi hands and that the alliance symbolises the close cultural kinship which linked French and Russian civilisation in the past and which emerges in an even stronger form in the relationship between the new France and the U.S.S.R.

Reactionary efforts have suffered a heavy defeat in the field of foreign policy. But in internal policy the fight continues and the issues are gradually becoming clarified, although a crisis has been averted largely owing to the more favourable situation created by the new orientation in foreign policy.

The resistance movement itself consists of a heterogeneous assemblage of groups and organisations, including left and right wing tendencies, but as a whole it constitutes a powerful lever for social change. Hence it is, above all, through open or disguised attacks on the resistance movement and its organs that reactionary tendencies are expressed.

This was seen in the attempt, so far abortive, to dissolve the Patriotic Guard. The same issue arose in another form over the Liberation Committees. These were set up by the united resistance movement on a local and departmental scale to lead the patriotic struggle and, after liberation, to take over local administration and establish the authority of the Provisional Government. What is the future of the Liberation Committee? A section of Government opinion would like to see them disappear. Emanual D'Astier, who was dropped from the Government and replaced by Tixier as Minister for the Interior last September, put the issue in the sharpest possible form in opening the political discussion at a congress of the resistance grouping "Movement for Na-

* Clemens Dutt's first article appeared in LABOUR MONTHLY, December, 1944.

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tional Liberation'' on October 24. He said:

"There exist apparently two powers: that of the Resistance and that of the Government. The former has a strong structure, but it has seemed as if the Government desired to see the dissolution of its organs, while the Resistance has seen in these organs inspiration and support for Government action. . . . The result is that the Government and the Resistance live in two different worlds."

The vitality of the Departmental Liberation Committees was demonstrated by their National Congress, held on December 15, 1944, with representatives from all departments of France. Reports showed that the committees were fulfilling an important role in mobilising local forces for carrying out the programme of the National Resistance Council and advising the Government prefects. The delegates demanded that the political responsibility of the committees should be recognised by a statutory extension of their powers and the provision of finance for organising and supervising economic reconstruction.

The Congress also declared in favour of postponing elections for local and departmental councils which, according to Government decision, had been fixed to take place in February. This question has aroused acute controversy for some time past. The National Front, one of the chief resistance organisations supported by the Communist Party, strongly urged that such contests in wartime would be out of place and would be vitiated by the absence of three million prisoners and deportees in Germany, as well as of soldiers in the army.

It has now been decided that the elections will be postponed until the spring, owing to difficulties in compiling the electoral register, and in January de Gaulle declared that the elections would be regarded as only provisional until full elections could be held. Thus, in the present more harmonious atmosphere, the issue has ceased to be acute.

The fate of the Liberation Committees is bound up with that of the National Resistance Council itself. Even before the attacks on the resistance movements of Belgium and Greece voices were raised in France, suggesting that the French resistance movement had outlived its usefulness. It was argued that the movement was a temporary expedient, uniting all those ready to face the dangers of opposing German occupation quite regardless of political affiliation, social origin or religious beliefs. Now that this task no longer exists it is maintained that the Resistance can neither replace the government organs nor the political parties, and is unnecessary alongside them.

The relations of the resistance organisations to one another and to the political parties remain very tangled, although a sorting-out process is steadily going on. The various resistance bodies have to some extent behaved as if they were ill-defined political parties and their separate representation in the Consultative Assembly has added to the large variety of tints in the so-called "political rainbow." Thus, a diagram of the semi-circle of benches in the Assembly reveals some thirty different groups. Maurice Thorez, secretary of the French Communist Party, has stressed the danger to national unity involved in this splintering.

In the last couple of months the situation has been somewhat simplified by the fusion or federation of various groups. Two main resistance groupings persist: the National Front, which is a broadly-based association of a generally left character, having the support of the Communist Party, and the Movement for National Liberation, which combines some

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half dozen resistance bodies of which the chief are "Combat," "Resistance," "Franc-Tireur" and "Liberation-Sud." Negotiations for the fusion of these two great groupings have been in progress since the end of November.

Outside these two groupings, two others have recently come into existence. One is the Popular Republican Movement, formed by the fusion of the two parties of the Catholic left: the Popular Democratic Party and the Young Republic. The other is the Union Travaillliste, formed by the fusion of two resistance organisations, Liberation-Nord and the Civil and Military Organisation (O.C.M.). The latter has the reputation of being right-wing and the new union is looked upon by some critics as an anti-communist move.

On the broad issues of democratic policy, both home and foreign, there has never been such unanimity as is to be observed in France today. In general, it is difficult to see much difference between the programmes on immediate policy of the various resistance organisations, or even between them and those of the political parties. It is noteworthy that even on internal policy, after a full-dress debate early in January, the Consultative Assembly adopted a unanimous resolution. Over one hundred members, however, were absent or abstained from voting, an indication that the unanimity was only apparent.

Where differentiation is beginning to show itself is in regard to the profound social changes demanded by the action programme of the National Resistance Council, and especially the nationalisation of key industries. This is becoming the touchstone of the attitude of the resistance bodies as well as of the political parties. The resolution adopted by the Consultative Assembly called for the eviction of the feudal powers dominating French economy and the socialisation of banks, insurance companies, sources of energy and the most important means of production.

Ministers remained silent in the debate and the only opposition was voiced by the spokesman of the right-wing Republican Federation. The number of abstentions from voting, however, is evidence of the strength of the conservative elements who are against any deep-seated changes in the social structure. Nevertheless, the large volume of feeling in favour of such changes, against which no member of the Assembly dared to vote, is very significant.

The differentiation of political outlook among those who are united in supporting the re-establishment of democracy is crystallising in three main trends. On the left, under the pressure of the organised working-class, is the demand for fundamental change of a socialist character. On the right is the smaller, but influential section of the population that wants an orthodox political democracy as in other advanced capitalist countries. In between is a mass of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois elements, including notably the Catholics of the Popular Republican Movement and the Christian Trade Unions, who want a social revolution carried out by agreement and in legal tranquility. This vague Christian Socialism is very characteristic of middle-class opinion in France today.

The same differences are repeated in the political parties. It becomes all the more evident, therefore, that the resistance organisations cannot form a new political party, whether a single party or several new parties, but that their members are gradually aligning themselves with one or other of the existing parties.

Among these, only the Communist Party emerges from the testing period of occupation strengthened, united

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and with immensely heightened prestige. All the other parties have been undermined and split by "collaboration." The Socialist Party has been so affected thereby that it has had to expel more than half its former parliamentary deputies to the number of over seventy. Hence its desire to find new allies and its negotiations for fusion with one or other of the resistance groupings. Moreover, a joint committee for establishing unity between the Communist and Socialist parties has at last been set up, giving hope for unity of action of the working-class as a whole.

The only party, other than the Communists, which has gained ground during the war is that of the Popular Democrats or Christian Democrats. Before the war this party had only about a dozen deputies, but the outlook of many bourgeois resistance leaders could be described roughly as Christian democrat and the party itself has three representatives in the Provisional Government.

The Radical-Socialist Party, the traditional centre party in France, has also been much weakened by collaboration, but the radical attitude, with its slogan "neither reaction nor revolution" is deeply ingrained in the peasantry and petty-bourgeoisie. It is to be noted that a congress of the remnants of the party held in Paris passed a resolution expressing regret at structural changes being made in the country's economy before the people have been consulted, although the party is divided on this issue and some prominent members are in favour of socialisation measures.

Certainly the last word rests with the people of France. After the trial which they have gone through, they are in no mood to go back to the corrupt capitalist democracy of the pre-war years. General De Gaulle's repeated declarations on the necessity of destroying the feudal and anti-national power of the trusts is taken very seriously by the French people and lies at the base of popular confidence in him. He has now the opportunity of making himself the foremost statesman of liberated Europe by taking the lead in modifying the social structure to meet the needs of a full political and economic democracy.

For that, the French people must have their say. Last October a congress of the National Front called for a great mobilisation of the people to carry out the tasks involved in reconstruction and the restoration of French greatness. It proposed the convocation of local and departmental "States General," after the model of the French Revolution, based on "patriotic assemblies" representing all local patriotic organisations and groupings of every kind, and finally the convening of a national "States General" on July 14 of this year. This idea has been taken up by the French Communist Party and was supported also by the Congress of Departmental Liberation Committees.

At any rate, it represents one form of realising the slogan: "let the people speak," being based on an appeal to the people and aiming at closer contact with the mass of the people. In the present transitional period, with the new France in the making, the French popular masses are showing their soundness and vitality by their eager desire to find forms by which they will have an effective voice in the new democracy.

BOUND VOLUMES.

No date can yet be given as to delivery of L.M. bound volumes for 1944.

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Equal Pay

by L. C. WHITE

(General Secretary, Civil Service Clerical Association)

IT is a well-known and well-tried technique of Governments to appoint a Royal Commission to deal with a problem which is increasing in its political embarrassments, and I confess to a good deal of apprehension at the decision to set up a Royal Commission to deal with aspects of the Equal Pay issue.

The Terms of Reference to the Commission require it to deal principally with the implications of the application of the principle. Recognising that there are implications, and appreciating that they cannot be ignored, I consider that the elaborate machinery of a Royal Commission is not the best suited to deal with the problem. But the Commission has been appointed, and it becomes necessary for us to ensure that all the helpful evidence that can be tendered to it comes from the interested organisations and in particular from the Trade Union movement.

I have been more closely associated with the agitation for equal pay for men and women which has been going on in the Civil Service for more years than I have been connected with it, and the history of this particular movement will be of interest to all sections of workers; for if the Government as the largest employer of labour in the country refuses to concede the principle of the rate for the job, there is very little prospect of other employers acting more generously.

As far back as May, 1920, the House of Commons adopted, without a division, a motion that women Civil Servants should receive the same pay as men. One's ordinary conception of the working of a democratic Parliament would lead to the assumption that this ended the controversy so far as the Public Service was concerned. But the Government refused to accept the motion on financial grounds, and promised a review of the situation not later than five years hence.

In August of 1921 the Parliamentary position was reversed by the adoption of a motion tabled by the Government to the effect that the House could not commit itself to the increase in expenditure involved in the payment of women at the same rate as men, but providing that the question should be reviewed within a period not exceeding three years.

The promised review never materialised. It was refused on financial grounds in 1924, 1925 and 1929. All through this period the Government insisted that it accepted the principle, but that it could not afford to apply it.

In 1929 there was a change of front. The Government receded from the position that it accepted the principle of the rate for the job, but could not afford to apply it; and referred the whole matter to the Royal Commission on the Civil Service. Two years later this Commission reported that its members were equally divided on the subject, and so nothing was done.

In 1936, the House of Commons passed a motion put forward by Miss Ellen Wilkinson, M.P., by 156 to 148, to the effect that the time had come for the Government to give effect to the resolution which had been adopted in favour of equal pay way back in 1920. Five days later the Government of the day, by making the issue one of confidence, was able to secure a reversal of the earlier decision.

The position so far as the Civil Service is concerned can, therefore, be summarised as follows. On two occasions Parliament has adopted the principle of the rate for the job; for a

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period of nine years successive Governments protested their fidelity to the principle, but later, when, in spite of this, the matter was referred to a Royal Commission, nothing was done because the members of the Commission were equally divided. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that, so far as the Civil Service is concerned, we regarded with profound apprehension the fact that this matter had been referred to another Royal Commission.

The case for equal pay in the Civil Service is overwhelming. Appointments to many of our grades are made as the result of open competitive examinations. Men and women compete on equal terms, neither sex is given any preference. Successful candidates, be they men or women, are allocated to the vacancies that happen to be available at the time, and it is entirely a matter of chance whether a particular post is filled by a man or a woman. Within the Departments themselves men and women are interchangeable, on their different jobs, but in spite of all this, the women's rate is, on the average, only about 80 per cent. of the men's rate. There is an overriding provision that the maximum differentiation against women shall not in any case exceed £175 per annum.

Opponents of the principle of Equal Pay argue that the man normally has greater responsibilities than the woman and that therefore the gap in remuneration is justifiable. Superficially, this argument may have some appeal, but in relation to the Civil Service, as indeed, in relation to all other forms of employment, it does not bear investigation.

In the first place, it has never been the practice to fix the pay of Government employees to their personal circumstances. The scales are laid down for the different classes of work and they apply to members of the grades regardless of their personal circumstances. The man with a wife and five children gets as much and no more than the unmarried man with no similar responsibilities, and it is clearly illogical to differentiate against women on the totally fallacious basis that all men have family and other responsibilities, whereas all women have no equivalent responsibilities. But even if there were logic in justification for the denial of the rate for the job to women, on the grounds advanced by opponents of equal pay, the case must surely disappear with the introduction of any reasonable scheme of family allowances.

But it is interesting to look at the amount of the gap between the pay of men and women in order to appreciate that the consideration of family responsibilities cannot possibly be justification for the present system of differentiation. The rate of pay of a male clerk in the Civil Service is, at the maximum, £350 per annum. The rate of pay for a woman clerk performing similar duties is, at the maximum, £280 per annum. If, therefore, the principle of unequal pay is to be justified on grounds of differing responsibilities, those who support this contention are reduced to agreeing to the proposition that the difference of £70 per annum is sufficient to enable the married man to maintain his wife and his family. Obviously this amount is quite inadequate to make such provision. Clearly the generalisation about the greater responsibilities of men over women is an unconvincing excuse for employing women at a rate of pay lower than that appropriate for the job they are doing.

During the war, some Trade Unions have been able to make agreements giving the male rate of pay to women who are doing jobs formerly done by men. This is true, I believe, in the transport and engineering industries and is a step in the right direction.

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Certainly it is an improvement on the position in the Government's own service where, in wartime as in peacetime, women are not only doing work which was previously done by men, but are employed side by side on precisely the same sort of jobs as men, whilst still being subjected to inferior rates of pay. But it would be unwise to assume that the battle for equal pay has been finally won even in those areas of employment where, under wartime pressure, the principle of the rate for the job has been applied. Underlying the condition that a woman shall get the male rate when she is doing a job previously done by a man, is the implication that segregation of work is a necessary and desirable thing. That is a principle which the supporters of equal pay must reject, because it largely accepts the fallacious point of view of the opposition. Suitability of particular people to perform particular jobs is not necessarily related to their sex. The only sound principle is to determine the appropriate rate of pay to be given for the performance of a piece of work regardless of who did it in the past, who is doing it now, or who may do it in the future.

The agitation for equal pay has, in the past, been sponsored largely by women, and this has led to the misconception among many male workers that the issue is what is sometimes described as a feminist issue with which men need not concern themselves. During the war years, however, there has been an increasing appreciation among men that this is an unsound and unsafe assumption. The employment of cheap labour is recognised by Trades Unionists as a bad and a dangerous thing. It matters nothing to the soundness of this principle whether cheap labour becomes available because women are employed on the job, or because people are found to do a job who are willing to take less than the agreed Trade Union rates. The blunt fact is that men can only be indifferent to this issue of equal pay for the sexes at the risk of sacrificing whatever standards they have been able to gain as the result of Trade Union activity.

There is evidence that the Royal Commission is trying to complete its job with expedition, and this is all to the good. Nothing is more dangerous than that this issue should be allowed to linger on indefinitely until the time when the Government feels that it is no longer compelled to recognise the need for, or the value of, the services that women have given and are giving in the national effort. But we must be prepared for the possibility that this Royal Commission, like the Royal Commission which dealt with the Civil Service problem in 1931, will fail to produce an agreed report. In this event it will be for the Government to determine what has to be done in the resultant situation. I believe that, in some Governmental quarters, the decision to refer this matter to a Royal Commission was prompted largely by the hope that no unanimity would be achieved, and that this lack of accord would provide an excuse for doing nothing. Against this possibility the Trade Union movement in particular must be prepared, and the whole weight of the labour movement must, if necessary, be brought to bear in order to ensure that a principle which Parliament itself has adopted on two occasions in the last quarter of a century is at long last applied.

DISCUSSION GROUPS.—Readers in Discussion Groups and other readers are reminded that the stencilled **Discussion Guide** is available at 3/- a year, inclusive of postage.

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Mr. Brailsford, Devil's Advocate

by ILYA EHRENBURG

(From War and the Working Class)

(Retranslated from Liberte, Algiers, Aug. 17, 1944)

I READ Mr. Brailsford's book on my way back to Moscow from Lithuania and Byelorussia. I seem still to see the ruins of towns and the places of abomination—Trostyanets, near Minsk, and Ponary, near Vilna—where the Germans asphyxiated hundreds of thousands of defenceless persons with gas.

While German administrators executed and burned, while German engineers constructed "*Gas Wagen*" and improved them into "*Gas Kippwagen*" ("Tip-out Gas Waggons") Mr. Brailsford pondered on the future of Germany. His book appeared in London in 1944.

Consider well this figure "1944" and then reckon: while the Red Army was liberating the Soviet motherland, while the patriots of France, of Yugoslavia, of Poland and other occupied countries were waging an heroic struggle against the occupation forces, Mr. Brailsford was working to save the Germans from their coming expiation.

Mr. Brailsford does not, indeed, dare to deny the extermination of peaceful people by the Germans. But he hastens to whitewash the hangmen. I shall quote a sinister passage from this book published in London, that same London which today endures the barbarous bombardment of the flying bombs, yet a book that might have appeared just as well in Berlin:—

We should note, Mr. Brailsford writes, that when the Germans fought against British troops, their behaviour was correct: with few exceptions, they observed the rules of war. In Norway, Holland and France, if their conduct was often brutal, at least it was much better than in Eastern Europe. It is only in dealing with races whom they consider "subhuman," the Jews and the Slavs, that they have flung away all restraint, exterminated hundreds of thousands and treated human beings as if they were noxious animals. The inference is, I think, that their cruelty is not instinctive or congenital. They do not act in this monstrous way merely because they enjoy it. They are obeying a theory: they are even carrying out a duty.

Thus Mr. Brailsford, citizen of the country of Magna Carta and the franchise, author of a book on Voltaire and another on Shelley, in the 71st year of his age, undertakes the defence of Himmler and his sadistic S.S., who buried children alive and roasted women in Orthodox churches, Catholic churches, and synagogues, "carrying out" thereby "a duty."

In olden times, in religious disputations, the spokesmen who defended evil were termed "Devil's Advocates." This designation is perfectly suited to Brailsford.

I leave it to the relatives of the British prisoners murdered in cowardly fashion by the Germans to argue the subject of "correct behaviour" with Brailsford. I leave it to the Frenchmen of the Maquis, the students of Holland, and the pastors of Norway, to have a frank heart-to-heart talk, as soon as the opportunity presents itself, with this Devil's Advocate whose only acquaintance with the Germans consists of romantic memories of the past: fifty years ago this compassionate "humanitarian" studied at a Berlin university.

For myself, I shall content myself with observing that the "sub-human races" are not merely *indignant* about the "*theory*" of the Hitlerites. We know their *practice*, and we are *deter-*

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mined firmly to suppress these child-assassins. In so far as we are still capable of indignation, we are *indignant* not at the deeds of Himmler, but at the words of Brailsford. Which we understand in no wise correctly render the sentiments of the British people.

How does Mr. Brailsford propose to treat the criminals? He begins by desiring to save Hitler himself and his closest collaborators. According to Mr. Brailsford the Fuehrer cannot be placed on trial. Why?

He explains that it is inconceivable that "enemies can fairly try an enemy." This means, any vile murderer is entitled to object to his judge as follows: "Excuse me. You arrested me. Hence you are my enemy, and have no right to try me."

"To reverse the moral values of civilised men is," according to Mr. Brailsford, "not a crime known to international law." Hence, Hitler cannot be placed before a law court. So what should one do with him? Brailsford suggests that we should profit by the precedent of the treatment of Napoleon, and "intern" on some "remote island," "Hitler and all the heads of his party," as well as all "the heads of the Gestapo."

No doubt some charming island will have to be set aside for Hitler, and here he will be able to write his memoirs on baby-massacre; while Himmler, in a neighbouring country house, will start composing sonnets on the gas-waggon. Goebbels and Goering, for their part, will plant peas, and exchange letters with Mr. Brailsford on international law.

This, however, is not enough. What should be done with the S.S.? Here is Brailsford's recipe:—

> They should be employed . . . to rebuild the German towns shattered by our bombers.

Is this a publisher's error or a misprint? Not at all. This is justice—*a la* Brailsford. You might have supposed that the S.S.—the miserable perverts of the punitive detachments, the thinkers-up of tortures, the supreme specialists in arson—should reconstruct Oradour, Lidice, Smolensk, Orel, Gomel, all of which they burned. But no, Brailsford suggests that they should rebuild their own mansions in Essen and Cologne.

Mr. Brailsford is indignant. Is it possible to send these "German soldiers" who have broken the "recognised code of military law" to the countries that have suffered from the war? No . . . for that, you see, would be "slave labour." And the practitioners of arson are not criminals, but persons who were "carrying out a duty."

The Devil's Advocate does not conceal his tenderness for Fascism. He finds certain acts of Hitler worthy of esteem, he organised "foreign excursions." We have seen these "excursions." We have seen the "excursionists" in Rostov, in Kiev and in Minsk.

He declares that the "New Order" "achieved some relatively good results." The Germans did much to "intensify . . . backward agricultural practice" in Rumania and "even in Poland." Brigandage, according to this righteous of the righteous, is really a virtue. And after all, he reminds us, you cannot blame the Germans for having shouted "Heil Hitler," for did not Hitler "cure unemployment" and make "all Germany . . . busy"?

It is not perhaps relevant to discuss what work it was on which, *via* Hitler, the Germans became "busy." The ruins of the "Coventrated" towns of Britain sufficiently indicate the nature of this work.

I shall quote some further practical propositions put forward by Brailsford:—

> We ought as soon as possible and on as large a scale as possible to open our doors

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by way of exchange to German children and students.

"The feeding of the German people" will be a responsibility immediately following the armistice. "Food . . . must be distributed impartially over the whole Continent" ("partisanship" must not "bias our scales") "in accordance with the physiological needs of the inhabitants."

The best expedient will be to organise as promptly as possible the rebuilding of the towns demolished by our bombers. . . . Germany had some of the world's best architects.

We should demand from the Germans nothing, in kind or amount, that would lower their standard of life below the general European level or prejudice their future recovery.

Thus, the incendiaries, with the services of good architects, shall engage in rebuilding—the towns of Germany. The destroyers of Europe shall be on the priority list for receipt of American food, while Brailsford trembles lest a mite too much may be given to the Serbs, the Greeks or the White Russians before the "physiological needs" of the Germans are fully satisfied. And, finally, the stainless cherubs of the *Hitlerjugend*—in case they have not yet sufficiently ravaged foreign lands—shall be sent to travel in Europe, not now in tanks, but in sleeping-cars. Such is the choice programme of Brailsford.

This inhuman "humanitarian" is afraid lest certain territories may be taken away from the Germans. Speaking of the possible transference of certain Russian territories to Poland, he exclaims that in such case "the congested population of the Reich would at last cry out for *lebensraum* with good reason."

One might almost suppose that Brailsford is unaware of how the Germans, after having swallowed France, Belgium, Holland, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Norway, the Balkans and Poland, threw themselves upon the Caucasus, crying out that they needed "*Lebensraum.*"

Brailsford demands that the Czechoslovaks should not expel the German traitors from within their country, that Austria should be permitted to "rejoin Germany," and that, in all cases of proposals for alteration of Germany's frontiers, these should be "submitted . . . to a neutral commission."

He does not indicate who should preside over this "neutral commission."

General Franco, possibly. . . .

There is a lyrical digression in the book: Mr. Brailsford finds it convenient to shed a few tears over the graves of the millions of ferociously assassinated Jews. Then, after wiping away these tears, he makes the following proposal: "A strong case could be made for a grant in kind to promote irrigation and schemes of development in Palestine. This is a debt which decent Germans . . . will wish to pay."

The "grant" of "decent Germans" for the graves of hundreds of thousands of children! What an outrage upon the memory of the victims! No, it is not water in Palestine, but the blood of the "decent" criminals, for which the earth that covers these myriads of bodies of torn and tortured children cries out.

The German people is sick, its treatment is not a matter for policemen, but a "problem in mass psychology," laments Brailsford of the nation whose defence he has undertaken. And he goes on: "A psychologist . . . would probably prescribe a long period of mental rest and freedom."

Poor dears. . . .

They are all so tired of all this hanging and burying children alive and burning down towns . . . they need physical and mental rest. They need complete freedom. Let them repose

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themselves and then begin hanging once again. Let them sleep awhile and then start once more, burning down the towns that so far they have left unburned, . . .

There are some words upon which it is impossible to comment. There are some pronouncements incapable of even being discussed.

The consciences of all honest persons from the Volga to California, from Leningrad to Coventry, will be revolted by the impudence of N. Brailsford. When the criminals come up for judgment, he may plead as "Devil's Advocate." His pleading will not be helpful to the criminals so dear unto his heart.

Document of the Month

C.I.O. and a New World Labour Body

Amongst the decisions taken at the Chicago Convention of the Congress of Industrial Organisations in November, 1944, was the following:—

WHEREAS (1) The C.I.O. consistently urged the establishment of international unity, including the unions of all the United Nations and the free countries. Such unity is essential to speeding victory in the war and to establishment of a just and lasting peace after the war.

(2) The unshakeable unity of the United Nations during the war has been based on the fighting strength furnished by labour, which provided the material and political strength needed to carry out the decisions of the leaders of the United Nations.

If labour is to have a voice in the history-making decisions that are being made and will be made in the peace settlements, it must present a united voice through a positive, working alliance of the labouring people of the free world.

(3) In our own hemisphere, the resistance to fascist trends and the affirmative aid to the prosecution of the war by the United Nations has been due to the existence of free Trade Unions wherever they have been able to function. Co-operation and collaboration between the labour organisations of the Latin American countries and their Confederation, the C.T.A.L. and the C.I.O., has been of the utmost value.

(4) The re-emergence of organised labour in the liberated countries of Europe, first as a spearhead of the various resistance movements and then as a vital partner in the rebuilding of free institutions, has underlined the importance of our co-operation with them.

(5) The rebuilding of Trade Unions in countries yet to be liberated and finally in the enemy nations themselves is the surest guarantee of a rebirth of democracy and of world security.

(6) Through international labour collaboration the Trade Unions will be in a position of guarantee to the people of the world that every phase of Nazism shall be wiped off the face of the earth and assure the full and stern punishment of war criminals. It must be made clear to the German people that they shall atone for the crimes and horrors that they have visited upon this earth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, (1) The C.I.O. endorses and approves President Murray's action in accepting an invitation to the British Trades Union Congress to attend both a preliminary conference in London on December 4 of representatives of the British Trades Union Congress, the Soviet Union, and of the United States, and the full conference in the same city early in January of next year.

(2) The C.I.O. supports the project of a new single powerful international labour body that shall include all the unions of free countries on a basis of equality, excluding none and relegating none to a secondary place and be capable of defending the interests of the common man.

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Book Reviews

The Liberation of Burma

Blue Print for Burma (Conservative Central Office).

THE COMMONS Debate on Burma (December 12) can only be regarded as highly unsatisfactory by all those who hoped that in the interests of our troops fighting in Burma and of a speedy end to the domination of Burma by the Japanese the Government would announce an unqualified policy of liberation that would win over to active co-operation the Burmese national movement. Despite pressure from many Members and some sharp comment in *The Times* which provoked a severe rebuke from Tory spokesmen, Mr. Amery was not only content with the vaguest of promises for Burma's post-war Dominion status, but insisted upon excusing his refusal to fix any time-table of liberation by the ominous statement that unforeseen events might force us to go back upon any policy now announced.

Having failed to issue a rousing call to Burmese nationalists to fight for their liberation alongside our armies, the danger now exists that the pious hopes for Burma's "partnership" in the Empire will be given concrete form along the lines outlined by the Committee of seven Conservatives in their *Blue Print for Burma*. This policy statement, sharply criticised alike by *The Times* and by the Burmese Refugees Association, proposes a period of six years in which Burma will be ruled by a Governor without any Burmese representative Assembly or Council. A few Burmese are to be associated with the Governor in an advisory capacity and together this outfit will eventually put a new constitution before a Constituent Assembly. But the "Dominion Status" which this Conservative Committee envisages is to be qualified by a Treaty which will give special rights and privileges (including compensation for war losses) to British business interests which return to Burma.

In other words, the Conservatives, so far from making some sort of "Cripps offer" to Burma, which alone would have any chance of satisfying their intense nationalism since the Japanese occupation, are trying to hammer out some kind of constitution like the 1935 India Act. If this attempt is successful, it is painfully clear that our soldiers in the Far East are going to have to pay with their blood for the determination of monoply interests to re-establish themselves in control of Burma's economic life.

M.C.

Onslaught on Tories

T. L. HORRABIN'S Penguin book should have a wide circulation, especially in those circles subject to Tory influence and ideas. It is a terrific onslaught on Toryism and th Tory Party and if well used should be valuable in an election campaign.

He shows how they cunningly and unscrupulously lied to and deceived the electorate, prepared the stage for depressing the conditions of the workers and tried to break their organisations before and during the general strike: how they assisted Hitler and war under the mistaken idea that Germany and Russia would destroy one another, with Britain looking on as a spectator. When we discuss "war criminals" we are not without them in this country.

There are many weaknesses in the book, such as referring to the era of "competitive capitalism" as "the period of abundance," his criticism of the Trade Unions and his failure to understand that "Socialism in one country" was not presented by Stalin in 1934, in contrast to world revolution, but was actually presented by Lenin and put into practice by his great disciple Stalin, as against those who claimed that Russia would have to go through a period of capitalism.

This mistake of Horrabin's is, of course, the outcome of the trickery of the Trotskyites, who used revolutionary phrases to cover up their support of the Mensheviks.

But these weaknesses can be forgiven, considering the general character of the book, and particularly for the production of the letter Chamberlain sent to Hitler and read to the House of Commons, before he went to Munich. No one present on that occasion can say he did not know there was going to be a betrayal. It is all there in the letter. But get the book and read it.

W. GALLACHER.

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Darkest Hungary

In Darkest Hungary by G. Paloczy-Horvath. With Introduction by Michael Karolyi (Victor Gollancz Ltd., 5*s*).

HITLER'S MOST stubborn satellite, Hungary, is at last finding her way to the side of the freedom-loving peoples. In Debrecen, where Kossuth appealed for a struggle against the Habsburgs in 1848, a provisional Hungarian Government has been formed. This Government has the most important task of eliminating the remnants of the former rotten regime.

G. Paloczy-Horvath describes in simple and vivid language the history of the oppressed and disinherited, and above all, that of the peasants with small holdings and the landless agricultural labourers. He follows their struggles and defeats through the centuries, and shows the role of their Lords, that 5 per cent. of the population which owns 85 per cent. of the land, and which never hesitated to appeal to the foreign enemy for help against the people. The tradition of Hungarian quislings goes back hundreds of years. Habsburgs and Germans were the factor deciding in favour of the reactionary forces at all turning-points of Hungarian history.

History has repeated itself in this war, and at the side of Hitlerite Germany Hungary has been driven into catastrophe, But, as Michael Karolyi concludes in his introduction, "Germany has for a long time to come faded out from the pattern of power. This means a new chapter in the history of the Continent. For the common people of Hungary this may well bring the hour of social and political liberation."

With the fight against the Germans, for which the new provisional Government appeals, with the land reform, which they are beginning to put into practice, a new period in Hungarian history is beginning.

We do not agree with the author's opinion, where he is conditionally revisionist, nor with his view that the Hungarian people could not prevent themselves being driven into this war like cattle to the slaughter-house. The Hungarian people will have to overcome a tradition of hopelessness and weariness inherited from the past if they are to find a way out of darkest Hungary.

S. E. S.

India's Food and Population

The Food Supply by Professor Radhakamal Mukerjee: Oxford Pamphlets on India No. 8 (O.U.P., 9*d*).

THE STEEP upward curve of India's population increase during the last hundred years provides easy ammunition for the pseudo-scientists whose "science" plays a very second fiddle to their political thesis that all India's troubles are due, not to political causes, but to the infertility of the land and the over-fertility of the people. This contradiction, regarded as an irreversible Act of God, is seen as an obstacle to all political, economic or social advance.

Professor Mukerjee, the leading Indian authority on agrarian and dietary problems, starting from the hard fact that in 1935 the total food supply was only sufficient for six-sevenths of the population of India, is nevertheless not of this pseudo-scientific school of fatalists. His brief description of the terrible trail of moral and material desolation left by the Bengal famine is all the more striking for its factual sobriety—"There has been a wholesale relinquishment of holdings, a sale of huts and belongings, a wholesale exodus from the villages, the desertion of women and children, infanticide and a recrudescence of slavery as in the famines of the eighteenth century."

But, he insists, the famine was a man-made famine, representing a "tragedy of economic misplanning and political disagreement," a tragedy springing from a century of neglect of the needs and interests of the cultivating class. It was inevitable only in the sense that neglect and interested policies have made the impoverishment and ruin of the cultivator inevitable. But if the causes for this ruin are not removed, it is idle complacency to pretend that the danger of renewed famine is removed. Among the urgent steps recommended to avert this danger are the following: (1) Provision of irrigation facilities and the lowering of the water rate for canal irrigation. (2) Distribution of seeds and manures at nominal rates. (3) Reduction of rents. (4) Guaranteed prices to the cultivator. (5) Licensing of wholesale grain dealers. (6) Establishment

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of Co-operative Societies. (7) Rationing and the requisitioning of surplus stocks.

Apart from the fact that the broader political issues involved and the question of inflation are not touched upon it will be seen that these proposals materially coincide with those put forward by the Indian Communist Party for Famine Relief in Bengal.

More drastic and more long-term changes are necessary in Professor Mukerjee's view if India's increasing population is in future to be fed on a reasonable diet. The facts are that in 1935, assuming the daily caloric requirement per head at 2,800 calories, India fell short of food for 48 million of her average men, or in other words, a deficit of 423 calories in each man's ration. (Incidentally, the official gruel kitchens established in Bengal only provide 825 calories.) At the same time, not only is the yield per acre lower in India than in other countries, but there is a steady deterioration in the quality of her food grains and a steady tendency to switch over to non-food crops for the commercial market. Holdings are becoming more and more fractionalised, and the cultivator is so heavily in debt that he cannot afford to pay the fees for canal irrigation or the high prices of artificial fertilisers. Shortage of grazing land has produced degenerate and weakling herds. The cultivator tries to compensate for the poor quality of his cattle by increasing the size of the herds until there are as many as 67 cattle per hundred acres of sown land, as compared with China's 15 and Japan's 6.

Yet Mukerjee is in agreement with other experts that India can grow enough food to feed her growing population at a reasonable standard. In the first place, India cannot afford 110 million acres of culturable but uncultivated wasteland. India's canal and river waters must be made available to the cultivator. The area devoted to commercial non-food crops must be limited, and a greater area devoted to the more nutritive cereals. The findings of scientific research must be applied to improve crops, their productivity and their rotation. Government, with the help of scientists, must introduce new food crops and raise the yield per acre by providing cheap fertilisers. India must plan deliberately to reduce her cattle population and to improve its quality.

What kind of a Government can or will plan for a prosperous Indian agriculture along these lines? Or what kind of a Government will succeed in winning the necessary co-operation and good-will of the cultivator in carrying through such revolutionary changes? Professor Mukerjee is not concerned with these political implications nor, in this pamphlet, does he return to the deadening role of Landlordism in Indian agrarian economy. But perhaps Professor Mukerjee regards the answer to these questions to be so obvious as to require no comment.

MICHAEL CARRITT.

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